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International Specialists in the Environmental Sciences

DATE: August 11, 1980
TO: File
FROM: Robert Wachsmuth *R.W.*
SUBJECT: Indiana/TDD# F5-8008-2
Northwest Indiana

EPA Region 5 Records Ctr.



297717

On August 7, 1980, Bob Wachsmuth, Bob Bartholomew, John Cerocke and Renee Hix traveled to Northwest Indiana to perform an off-site reconnaissance on 2 landfill sites in Gary and East Chicago and 2 industrial plants in Whiting and Hammond, Indiana.

We arrived at Federated Metals, in Whiting, at 9:00 a.m. In order to survey the perimeter of the site it was necessary to enter from two different locations. While making the survey we took pictures, made notes and spoke to three neighborhood kids who were on the site.

We left Federated Metals at 10:30 a.m. and arrived in Hammond at the Stauffer plant at 11:00 a.m. We drove around the back of the plant along the railroad tracks and stopped there to take some pictures and make notes. We also questioned a man who claimed he worked for the railroad but may have actually been employed at Stauffer. At around 12:00 a.m. we drove back around the front of the plant and parked across the street from the entrance to take some pictures. At that time two men approached our car, said that they were from Stauffer, and asked for some identification and an explanation of our activities. Bob Bartholomew gave the men his business card and attempted to explain who we were. The men were not satisfied and expressed the belief that we were there illegally and had trespassed on private property. We explained that we had been on railroad and public property when the pictures were taken and had done nothing illegal. They still maintained that we had taken the pictures illegally and that they intended to call the EPA and E&E as they allow no one to take pictures unless they sign a secrecy agreement. At that point we asked them to identify themselves. They refused and would tell us only one of them was the plant manager. They also said that if we wanted to talk we should go over to the plant. Then we followed them over to the plant and Bob Wachsmuth went inside to explain to them more thoroughly who we were and what we were doing. They calmed down and told us that they had to call their corporate headquarters for advice on how to proceed. At that time we left.

At 1:30 p.m. we arrived at East Chicago Dump and took some pictures and made some notes. At 2:00 p.m. we arrived at the Gary City Landfill where we spent some time walking around the perimeter of the landfill making notes and taking pictures from several locations.

BW/df

Notes

Federated Metals

Kids were on the dump - dump was easily accessible as there was no fence or security. Kids said that there were fish such as bass, carp, bluegill and sunfish in the lake. They also said that a dog had burned its paws on "white stuff" which was on the dump. They had seen bulldozers on the dump pushing rocks into the lake. One kid said that he had dug up copper and zinc on the site and sold it. There was a potential for runoff into the lake - lake is lower than surrounding area. Also lake looks very shallow. There was standing water on the dump. We saw a possible sulfur leach on the ground.

Stauffer

Saw yellow drum spill on dump - could have possibly been sulfur. Drums seen on site said Vanadium Sulfuric Acid Catalyst and were yellow. Black drums on site said Hazardous Materials Pleasant Sulfur. Drums were from Nalco. The landscape was sandy and gravelly - only weeds were growing around the site. A train arrived at the rear of the plant to pick up tankers. Many of the drums were rusty - they were stacked 5 wide - 4 to a skid. Approx. 50-65 drums. There was a noxious odor that may have been sulfur - after a while we were coughing a lot. The railroad at the plant was Indiana Harbor Belt.

East Chicago Dump

Looked like mainly garbage and refuse. Gate was open so anyone could get in.

Gary City Landfill

Entrance on 20th and Burr. Lots of garbage dumped outside of the gate along Colfax. Gate on east side of dump locked and unattended. Residential neighborhoods surround the dump on 3 sides. The area is extremely sandy and a sand pit runs NW-SE across the street from the property. South 1/2 of dump is essentially undisturbed grassland. Gate on NW side of dump was open and accessible. Fence around dump was extremely dilapidated in some spots. SE part of dump used for garbage and is uncovered. Potential groundwater problems - there is standing water in the dump that may be at the water table. There is a brown tinge to the water. A good target for midnight dumping.

Pictures

Federated Metals

1. Southward looking view toward Calumet College from path - view of kids at entrance to dump.
2. View looking west from dump toward Calumet Avenue.
3. View SW toward marsh - next to 1st steel building at south edge of property.
4. View looking west along dump.
5. Picture looking west at entrance of path to dump.
6. Picture looking SE at the NW gate.
7. View south of the lake.
8. Looking into gate - SW at the slag.
9. Standing water on dump - view looking SE
10. Picture looking east of stacks and mounds on dump.

Stauffer

11. Looking into dump - picture of yellow discharge and drums.
12. View looking north at drums on site.
13. Telephoto of drums looking north - yellow drums.
14. Telephoto of black drums looking north.
15. Telephoto of black drums looking north.

East Chicago Dump

16. Picture of entrance.

Gary City Landfill

17. Picture of the garbage along fence.
18. Telephoto east view of rusty drums.
19. " "
20. " "
21. " "
22. View of dump from Colfax.
23. View of dump looking SE from residential street - Calhoun.
24. Picture of entrance.
25. Picture of entrance.